

Philadelphia County Prison,  
Debtors' Wing  
Reed Street and Passyunk Avenue  
Philadelphia  
Philadelphia County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1097-A

HABS  
PA,  
51-PHILA,  
672A-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

HABS  
PA  
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6724-

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE	COUNTY	TOWN OR VICINITY
PENNSYLVANIA	PHILADELPHIA	PHILADELPHIA
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME)		HABS NO.
PHILADELPHIA COUNTY PRISON, DEBTORS' WING		PA-1097-A
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES)		
Reed St. and Passyunk Ave.		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE)	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE)	
1836	Thomas U. Walter, FAIA (1804-1884)	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE)		
The Debtors' Wing was one of the finest examples of Egyptian Revival architecture in America. It was modeled after the Temple of Amenophis III, on the Isle d' Elephantine on the Nile. It was designed by Thomas U. Walter, one of the great 19th century American architects.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE)		
Egyptian Revival		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS)		
Coursed red sandstone ashlar front; Sandstone rubble sides and rear. Bearing-wall structural system.		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE)		
Measured 50'-1/2" (three-bay front) X 86'-2"; two stories on raised basement.		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE		
The most notable exterior feature is the front elevation. A good feeling of Egyptian originality is evident in this facade. The entrance is an Egyptian distyle in antis. The two well-proportionated columns are of lotus-bud form. Flanking windows have typically (continued on page 2)		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED)		
Central longitudinal corridor floor plan with flanking prison cells.		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE		
Demolished in 1968.		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE		
The front portico is in the possession of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.)		
See page 2.		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION	DATE	
Susan McCown, editor, Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS)	May 2, 1984.	

EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (continued from page 1):

narrowing frames. The main cornice and all window cornices are Egyptian cavetto cornices. The ornamentation over the entrance and on the main cornice are Egyptian winged disks. The winged disk on the main cornice is of carved stone, and the one over the entrance is of cast iron. The entrance doors have two elongated panels with round heads and are surrounded by diamond-shaped "pegs".

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

For further information, and bibliography:

Primary and unpublished sources:

Written HABS architectural and historical forms for Philadelphia County Prison, Debtors' Wing, 1966

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